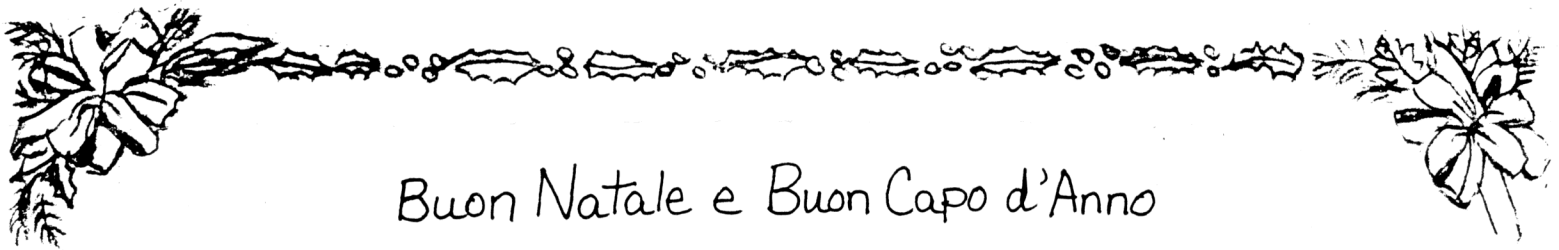




VOLUME VI No.2

CHRISTMAS ISSUE

DECEMBER 1989



Buon Natale e Buon Capo d'Anno

Our 5th Annual LaVigna Picnic

The following relatives and friends attended our 5th La Vigna family picnic on Sunday, August 6, 1989.

We had a great time singing, laughing, playing, talking, eating and just being together. This time the sun was shining brightly on us at the Washington Crossing State Park. What a sight to see us all join hands and listen to the greeting and short prayer before we sat down to eat together.!

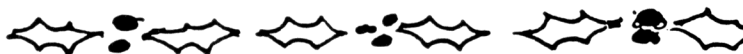
The age range, attending our picnic, was from 6 months (Alicia Sciscio) to the mid 80's (Jennie Conguindi Bilancio).

They came from all over - Trenton, Cherry Hill, Bordentown, Lawrenceville, Florence, Ham.Square, Glassboro, Hightstown, Flemington, (N.J.) Allentown, Media, Devon, Drexel Hill, (Pa.) Bath, (N.Y.) and Florence (Italy).

And Cristiano Passerini from Italy summarized it well with his comment in our Register-- "My name is Cristiano Passerini and I am from Florence, Italy and I want to thank all of you for this beautiful wonderful sunny day in America that we shared!"

Lew Bilancio
Bernice Smailer
Mary Armenti
Celeste Armenti
Carmen Armenti
Phyllis Armenti
Irma Candelori
Bob Candelori
Cheri Candelori
Anthony Chianese
Lilia Sciscio
Bud Sciscio
Alicia Sciscio
Mick Chianese
Cindy
Sue Garzio
Frank Garzio
Joey Garzio
Ralph Garzio
Diane Garzio
Laura Garzio
Stephen Garzio
Charles Davis
Beth Davis
Behrouz Hazany
Cayce Jacobsen
Amber Jacobsen
Fran Bilancio
Angelica Roberts
Ira Giuseppe Roberts Bilancio
Corinne Bilancio

Jennie Bilancio
Phyllis Innocenzi
Jennifer Pontani
Lucy Gervasio
Ralph Gervasio
Angela Gervasio
Cristiano Passerini
Lorraine Anthony
Jacalyn Anthony
Kristeena Anthony
John Anthony
Gina Cramer
Bob Immordino
Jennie Immordino
Carolyn MacLeod
Carrie MacLeod
Jaime MacLeod
Beatrice Johnson
Ray Johnson
Clora Acquaviva
Dean Acquaviva
Henry Montague
Dawn Alfonse
Tim Montague
Paul Ruocco
Chris Daniels
Susan Christopher
Terri Sweeney
Jimmy Sweeney
William Bilancio
David Fox
Janice Morphet

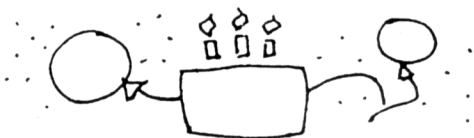


HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



- October 3 Joe & Pam Chianese
18 Clothilda & Dean Acquaviva
20 Anthony & Debra Armenti
29 Mary Lynn & Dan Nazzaro
- November 2 Sandy & Albert Remboske
- January 15 Gerald & Rita Chianese
23 Frances & Daniel Cohen
- March 8 Roberta Immordino & Dan Garcia
8 Nick & Marie Armenti
10 Pat & Jane Chianese
16 Jennie & Bob Immordino

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



- October 2 Lilia Chianese
3 Katherine Chianese
10 Ray Armenti
15 Susan Picascia
19 Mickey Chianese
19 Jennie Bilancio
26 Michael Gervasio
27 Angelica Roberts
29 Tim Montague
29 Christy Gervasio
30 Bernice Smailer
- November 1 Maria Armenti
13 Beatrice Johnson
15 Dean Acquaviva
19 Sue Garzio
21 Maria Pedata
22 Ron Armenti
24 Erma Candeloria
26 Rae Bilancio
29 Michael Roth
29 Janele Klepczynski
30 Carrie MacLeod
- December 5 Corinne Bilancio
15 Carmen Armenti
16 Ray Johnson
16 Beatrice Wiesner-Chianese
21 Ivan Bilancio
23 Brian Josephson
23 Anthony Armenti
25 Kimberly Chianese
26 Christine Slaninka
31 Suzanne Roth
- January 1 Mary Gervasio
9 Phyllis Gervasio
23 Beatrice Johnson
24 Joseph Chianese
27 Ralph Garzio
30 Debbie Armenti
31 Celeste Armenti
- February 2 Steven Armenti
3 Frank Garzio
7 Bob Chianese
12 Sandra Remboske
13 Marie Armenti
13 Angela Josephson
16 Lewis Bilancio
17 Alicia Sciscio
18 Vince Guerra
20 Ronald Cohen
- March 6 Angela Gervasio
7 Loren Armenti
7 Steven & Laura Garzio
24 Anthony Chianese
24 Louise Chianese
25 Ralph Gervasio
26 Carolyn MacLeod
26 Richard Brett Cohen
28 Pam Chianese
29 Angelo Chianese



STAFF THIS ISSUE

Angelo Chianese & Family
Beth Davis
Corinne Bilancio
Lewis Bilancio
Angelica Bilancio
Angelica Roberts
Frances Bilancio
Lorraine Anthony
Lucy Gervasio
Jennie & Bob Immordino
Dean Acquaviva
Clora
Beatrice Johnson
Lilia Sciscio



FA FESSE E CONTENTA

This expression was used often in Chambersburg, meaning "Keep them ignorant and happy" or "pull the wool over their eyes and keep them happy."

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Phyllis Innocenzi
Bob Immordino





LEW BILANCIO'S CHRISTMAS LETTER

Dear Friend,

Once again the holiday season inspires us, and La Vigna, our family newspaper, offers us the opportunity to bring you our news of the year.

This was the year of Gorbachev's glasnost, the year when the superpowers stepped back from a suicidal confrontation and opened the way to world peace. Even as I write this letter, Gorbachev and Bush are meeting off of Malta in the Mediterranean Sea.

And Florio has finally become governor of New Jersey.

But for us personally this has been a sad time. There was no letter last year because my sister Rose, who inspired La Vigna, died on August 18, 1988. My brother Leo came from Atlanta to attend her funeral without his wife Dorothy because she was ill.

That illness turned out to be cancer and after ten months of agonizing ups and downs Dorothy died May 29, 1989.

In the meantime Leo, who was known as Mr. Oglethorpe, was honored on February 9, 1989 which the university designated "Bilancio Day," no less.

However, stress takes its hidden toll, and Leo survived his wife only five months; he died of a heart attack on October 5.

This was also the year of the Hurricane Hugo which hit the East Coast, and the earthquake which hit the San Francisco area causing billions of dollars of damage and hundreds dead or injured.

However we must count our blessings. My dentist cheerfully reminds me that false teeth never have cavities. And of course we still travel, although when we count out our medical supplies the pills become more and more. On cruises we make sure our cabin is close to the elevator, and on excursions we ask the tour guide how many steps there will be to climb.

Our last tour was to Italy. My sister Lorraine and cousin Lucy came along. We had a fantastic time. "We

shall return" says Lucy, "we missed the Trevi Fountain and we have to go back to throw the coins in."

Corinne continues to work in the International Department of Meridian Bank in center city Philadelphia. She took a trip to Denmark in September and found it to be most "hyggelig." She recently turned 29 and expects this upcoming year to be an especially fine one. After all, many experienced people choose to remain 29 for years and even decades, so she figures it must be a good age.

'Tis the season to be jolly, so let's celebrate a hope for world peace and renewed efforts to share all the blessings of this earth with all its people.

Leo Bilancio
324 N. Delsea Dr.
Glassboro, NJ 08028



LEO BILANCIO

On October 5, 1989, Leo Bilancio died suddenly of a heart attack in his home in Atlanta, Georgia. How deeply we feel the loss of this wonderful husband, father, brother, and friend. His death occurred four months after he lost his beloved wife Dorothy whom he had nursed devotedly through her bout with cancer. We send our love to his children Ivan, who lives in Los Angeles, and Jane, who lives with her husband James near Atlanta. Leo is also survived by his brother Lewis, and sisters Jennie, Sylvia and Lorraine. Their sister Rose passed away in August of 1988.

Leo had just been honored earlier this year at Oglethorpe University for his outstanding contribution as professor of history. He was in fact chairman of the history department for the current academic year. A colleague recounted that at alumni gatherings, former students would abandon conversations with him to run to speak with Leo.

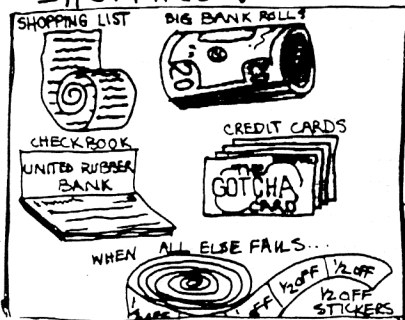
Leo was a man of exceptional commitment to family, to the life of the mind, and to the pursuit of an enlightened and well-balanced life. We are thankful for having known him.

FAMILY MAXIMS

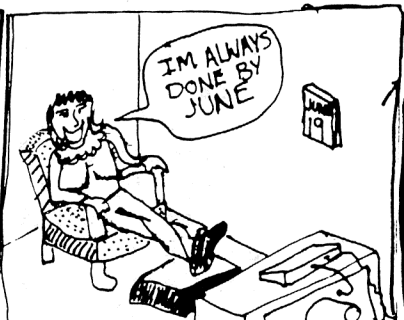
QUELLO CHE CI METTE, CI TROVA

This saying was often quoted by Carolina Chianese Bilancio and her daughters Rose and Jennie. It translates as "What you put into it, you will find there." In other words, "As ye sow, so shall ye reap."

IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME AGAIN, TIME ONCE MORE
FOR ALL OF US TO ACT OUT THE RITUALS OF YULETIDE
SHOPPING:
CHEER AND AGONY
LIKE...



THE COMPLETE SHOPPING KIT



SOME SHOPPERS ARE COMPULSIVE



SOME JUST EARLY-BIRDS



THEN THERES ME!!

TREE SHOPPING



THE 1ST. ONE? WELL



SO YOU LOOK



AND YOU LOOK MORE



UNTIL FINALLY

TREE TRIMMING



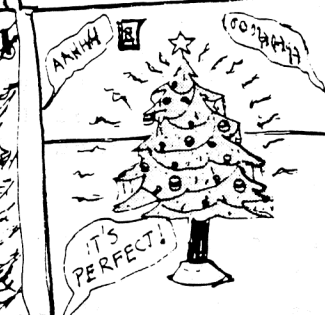
TREE WESTLE MANIA



SPAGHETTI WIRES

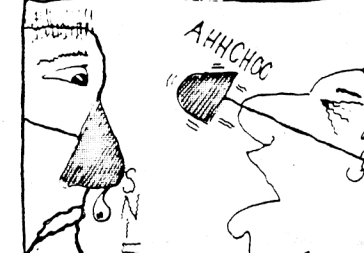


TINSEL FANATICS

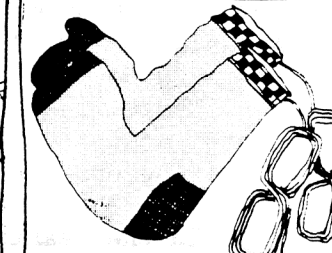


YET STILL-MAGIC

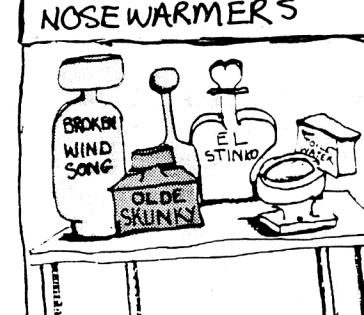
UNDESIRABLE PRESENTS



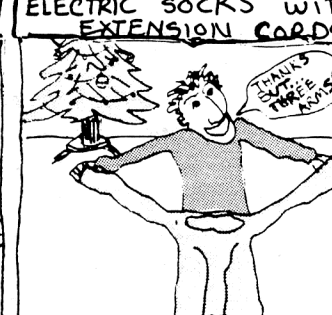
NOSE WARMERS



ELECTRIC SOCKS WITH EXTENSION CORDS



SMELLY PERFUMES



HOMEMADE SWEATERS

VIGNETTES:
HOME FOR THE HOLIDAZE



AND THE HOUSE IS SO FULL



AND SO NOISY!!



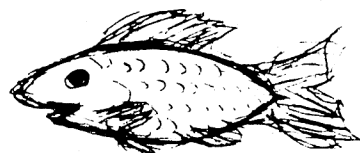
BUT IT FEELS SO GOOD



UNTIL THEY LEAVE



CHRISTMAS EVE BACCALA



I always remember Christmas Eve as a night on which we fasted in preparation for the great feast of the following day. Fish prepared in various ways would be served, along with pasta and vegetables.

A popular fish for this meal was Baccala, a dried and salted cod fish. Today it can be found in some supermarkets or in the fruit and produce stores in the 'Burg. It is necessary to soak it for at least a day before cooking with it. At home, Mom would serve this fish fried, in soup, and boiled and flaked in salad with cauliflower. As children, my brothers, Louis and Ralph, and my sister Mary and I preferred the baked version because it was made with tomatoes and we got to make scarpetta with our bread. Please see the recipe on the next page.

During my childhood, Christmas Eve was celebrated modestly and with simplicity. Essentially, the joy of our family gathering, in addition to the ritual of buying and preparing the special fish, are the memories that remain vivid through the years. Those of us who grew up in Chambersburg can remember how busy the fish stores became a few days before Christmas. For me, one of the striking memories of Christmas time is of the big metal tubs of water which held live eels (capitone) and were displayed on tables in front of the fish stores along both Butler and Hudson Streets. As a child, I remember accompanying my mother (Clorinda Bilancio) as she would go from one tub of swimming eels to the other, waiting for the one that was just the size she had in mind. She would point to it and the grocery boy would quickly grasp it behind the head, pick it up, and place it on a paper-lined scale. Then they would wait a minute or so for the eel to stop wiggling, so they could check the weight. In addition, each store carried many other varieties of fish such as smelts, squid, sea conch, octopus, stocco and baccala. The tradition of the seven fish dishes of Christmas Eve was well known by these storekeepers. Consequently, they were certainly well supplied. According to some of my research on the subject of this tradition, each of the seven fishes is supposed to be prepared a different way. Some of the books refer to the seven varieties as representative of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church. Other readings bring up Christ's seven last words, the seven works of mercy and the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. Take your pick. As for me, I've already chosen the seven sacraments.

In my home, we did not have all seven varieties at our "pranzo della vagilia" on Mott St. The fast and abstinence rules for the Eve were strictly followed and my father (Giuseppe Bilancio) would sit at the head of the table. He would bless the table and say grace and we would begin to eat. Each year I enjoyed surprising my parents at this supper with a "Christmas Letter" which the Fillipini Sisters at St. Joachim School would have us write on linen stationery with a Gesu Bambino decorating the top of the page. The envelope was tucked under Pop's dish as I would help set the table. When he would pick up his dinner plate to be served he would act surprised. Then he would read the letter out loud. It was written in Italian and contained praise and thanks to my parents along with my promise to be obedient and my wishes for a "Buon Natale" to Mamma and Papa.

A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all "La Vigna" readers and loved ones from Lucy Gervasio.



Il vino porta gioia al cuore E felicità All'anima



Wine gladdens the heart and mellows the mind.

1 1/2 lbs baccala	1 lrg can tomatoes
1/2 cup olive oil	crushed or cut in pieces
3 med-lrg onions, sliced	1 tbsp minced parsley
2 cloves garlic, sliced	1/2 t. oregano
1/2 t. pepper	

At least a day before cooking the fish, soak it in a large pan full of water for 24 hours or more, changing the water every 8 hours. The next day, rinse and cut the baccala into 3 inch squares and cook in boiling water for 5 minutes. Brown onions and garlic in olive oil in large skillet, add tomatoes, parsley, oregano and pepper and cook for 3 minutes. Skin the fish and place in a large well-oiled baking dish. Pour tomato mixture over it. Bake in moderate oven (375 F) 30 minutes. Taste and add salt only if needed. You must be very careful about salting any baccala dish. Sometimes the salty taste is not completely extracted by the soaking process. My sister Mary Armenti tells me that she soaks hers for several days (at least two) to insure that it will not be salty.

Merry Christmas

Lorraine Anthony
Imm

Lorraine Anthony
Bob & Jennie Immordino
Lucy H

Lucy Gervasio

Len Bilancio

Corinne Belamco

Beatrice Johnson
& family

Cara

W. Hart for your
Hear

La Vigna
90 Eggerts Road
Lawrenceville, N.J.

